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AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C. 714b and 714c; 16 U.S.C. 3839aa–3839–8

SOURCE: 68 FR 32348, May 30, 2003, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General Provisions

SOURCE: 74 FR 2308, Jan. 15, 2009, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 1466.1 Applicability.

(a) The purposes of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are to promote agricultural production, forest management, and environmental quality as compatible goals, and to optimize environmental benefits. Through EQIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and air quality, wildlife habitat, surface and groundwater conservation, energy conservation, and related natural resource concerns. EQIP's financial and technical assistance helps producers comply with environmental regulations and enhance agricultural and for-

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ested lands in a cost-effective and environmentally beneficial manner. The purposes of the program are achieved by planning and implementing conservation practices on eligible land.

(b) EQIP is available in any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

#### § 1466.2 Administration.

(a) The funds, facilities, and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) are available to NRCS for carrying out EQIP. Accordingly, where NRCS is mentioned in this Part, it also refers to the CCC's funds, facilities, and authorities where applicable.

(b) NRCS supports “locally led conservation” by using State Technical Committees at the State level and local working groups at the county or parish level to advise NRCS on issues relating to the EQIP implementation such as:

(1) Identification of priority resource concerns;

(2) Identification of which conservation practices should be eligible for financial assistance; and

(3) Establishment of payment rates.

(c) No delegation in this Part to lower organizational levels shall preclude the Chief from making any determinations under this Part, or from reversing or modifying any determination made under this Part.

(d) NRCS may enter into agreements with other Federal or State agencies, Indian tribes, conservation districts, units of local government, public or private organizations, and individuals to assist NRCS with implementation of the program in this Part.

#### § 1466.3 Definitions.

The following definitions will apply to this Part and all documents issued in accordance with this Part, unless specified otherwise:

*Agricultural land* means cropland, grassland, rangeland, pasture, and other agricultural land, on which agricultural and forest-related products, or livestock are produced and resource